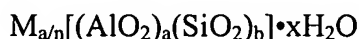


II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of performing drilling operations comprising:
drilling a wellbore with a mud;
introducing a wellbore treating fluid comprising zeolite and at least one carrier fluid into the wellbore; and
forming a mass in the wellbore by allowing the wellbore treating fluid to come into contact with the mud in the wellbore.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the zeolite is represented by the formula:



where M represents one or more cations selected from the group consisting of Na, K, Mg, Ca, Sr, Li, Ba, NH₄, CH₃NH₃, (CH₃)₃NH, (CH₃)₄N, Ga, Ge and P; n represents the cation valence; the ratio of b:a is in a range from greater than or equal to 1 and less than or equal to 5; and x represents the moles of water entrained into the zeolite framework.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the zeolite is selected from the group consisting of analcime, bikitaite, brewsterite, chabazite, clinoptilolite, faujasite, harmotome, heulandite, laumontite, mesolite, natrolite, paulingite, phillipsite, scolecite, stellerite, stilbite, and thomsonite.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the mud is a water-based mud.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises an oil-based carrier fluid.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises one or more oils selected from the group consisting of diesel, canola, kerosene, diesel oil, fish oil, mineral oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, soy oil, olive oil, cottonseed oil, peanut oil and paraffin.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises a synthetic-based carrier fluid.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the mass seals at least one space in the wellbore selected from the group consisting of fissures, fractures, caverns, vugs, thief zones, low pressure subterranean zones, and high pressure subterranean zones.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the mud is one of a synthetic-based mud and an oil-based mud.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises a water-based carrier fluid.
11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is selected from the group consisting of water and water-based gels.
12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is selected from the group consisting of fresh water, unsaturated salt solution, brine, seawater, and saturated salt solution.
13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is present in the wellbore treating fluid in an amount of from about 25% to about 95% by weight.
14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the forming of the mass further comprises allowing the wellbore treating fluid to come into contact with mud residing in at least one space in the wellbore such that the mass seals the space.
15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the at least one space in the wellbore is selected from the group consisting of fissures, fractures, caverns, vugs, thief zones, low pressure subterranean zones, and high pressure subterranean zones.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 5% to about 75% by weight.
17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 20% to about 60% by weight.
18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 30% to about 50% by weight.
19. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the wellbore treating fluid further comprises an activator.
20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the activator is present in the wellbore treating fluid in an amount of from about 1% to about 20% by weight, based on the total weight of the zeolite and the at least one carrier fluid.
21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein the activator is selected from the group consisting of calcium hydroxide, sodium silicate, sodium fluoride, sodium silicofluoride, magnesium silicofluoride, zinc silicofluoride, sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, sodium sulfate, and mixtures thereof.
22. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein the activator comprises calcium hydroxide in an amount of from about 1 to about 20 weight percent of the total weight of the zeolite and the carrier fluid.
23. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the wellbore treating fluid further comprises a surfactant.
24. (Original) The method of claim 23 wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of cetyltrimethylammonium chloride, cocoaalkyltrimethylammonium chloride,

cocoalkyldimethylbenzyl ammonium chloride, stearyltrimethylammonium chloride, alkylbehenyltrimethylammonium chloride dihydrogenatedtallowalkylethylmethyleammonium ethosulfate, didecyldimethylammonium chloride, dicocyldimethylammonium chloride, distearyldimethylammonium chloride, dioleyldimethylammonium chloride, trilaurylmethylammonium chloride, cocoyl-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl)methylammonium chloride, polyoxyethylene (15) cocoalkylmethylammonium chloride, olyel-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl) methylammonium chloride, tallowalkylmethylpropylenediammonium dichloride, and trimethyltallowammonium chloride.

25. (Original) A method of performing remedial operations in a wellbore penetrating a subterranean zone comprising:

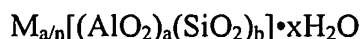
introducing a wellbore treating fluid comprising zeolite and at least one carrier fluid into the wellbore;

forming a mass in the wellbore by allowing the wellbore treating fluid to come into contact with a mud residing in at least one space in the wellbore; and

sealing the at least one space in the wellbore with the mass.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the at least one space in the wellbore is selected from the group consisting of fissures, fractures, caverns, vugs, thief zones, low pressure subterranean zones, and high pressure subterranean zones.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the zeolite is represented by the formula:



where M represents one or more cations selected from the group consisting of Na, K, Mg, Ca, Sr, Li, Ba, NH_4 , CH_3NH_3 , $(CH_3)_3NH$, $(CH_3)_4N$, Ga, Ge and P; n represents the cation valence; the ratio of b:a is in a range from greater than or equal to 1 and less than or equal to 5; and x represents the moles of water entrained into the zeolite framework.

28. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the zeolite is selected from the group consisting of analcime, bikitaite, brewsterite, chabazite, clinoptilolite, faujasite, harmotome,

heulandite, laumontite, mesolite, natrolite, paulingite, phillipsite, scolecite, stellerite, stilbite, and thomsonite.

29. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the mud is a water-based mud.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises an oil-based carrier fluid.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises one or more oils selected from the group consisting of diesel, canola, kerosene, diesel oil, fish oil, mineral oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, soy oil, olive oil, cottonseed oil, peanut oil and paraffin.

32. (Original) The method of claim 30 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises a synthetic-based carrier fluid.

33. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the mud is one of an oil-based mud and a synthetic-based mud.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises a water-based carrier fluid.

35. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is selected from the group consisting of water and water-based gels.

36. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is selected from the group consisting of fresh water, unsaturated salt solution, brine, seawater, and saturated salt solution.

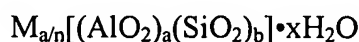
37. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is present in the wellbore treating fluid in an amount of from about 25% to about 95% by weight.

38. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 5% to about 75% by weight.
39. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 20% to about 60% by weight.
40. (Original) The method of claim 39 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 30% to about 50% by weight.
41. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the wellbore treating fluid further comprises an activator.
42. (Original) The method of claim 41 wherein the activator is present in the wellbore treating fluid in an amount of from about 1% to about 20% by weight, based on the total weight of the zeolite and the at least one carrier fluid.
43. (Original) The method of claim 41 wherein the activator is selected from the group consisting of calcium hydroxide, sodium silicate, sodium fluoride, sodium silicofluoride, magnesium silicofluoride, zinc silicofluoride, sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, sodium sulfate, and mixtures thereof.
44. (Original) The method of claim 43 wherein the activator comprises calcium hydroxide in an amount of from about 1 to about 20 weight percent of the total weight of the zeolite and the carrier fluid.
45. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the wellbore treating fluid further comprises a surfactant.
46. (Original) The method of claim 45 wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of cetyltrimethylammonium chloride, cocoaalkyltrimethylammonium chloride,

cocoalkyldimethylbenzyl ammonium chloride, stearyltrimethylammonium chloride, alkylbehenyltrimethylammonium chloride dihydrogenatedtallowalkylethylmethyleammonium ethosulfate, didecyldimethylammonium chloride, dicocyldimethylammonium chloride, distearyldimethylammonium chloride, dioleyldimethylammonium chloride, trilaurylmethylammonium chloride, cocoyl-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl)methylammonium chloride, polyoxyethylene (15) cocoalkylmethylammonium chloride, olyel-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl) methylammonium chloride, tallowalkylmethylpropylenediammonium dichloride, and trimethyltallowammonium chloride.

47. (Original) A remedial composition for treating a wellbore comprising zeolite and at least one carrier fluid.

48. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 wherein the zeolite is represented by the formula:



where M represents one or more cations selected from the group consisting of Na, K, Mg, Ca, Sr, Li, Ba, NH₄, CH₃NH₃, (CH₃)₃NH, (CH₃)₄N, Ga, Ge and P; n represents the cation valence; the ratio of b:a is in a range from greater than or equal to 1 and less than or equal to 5; and x represents the moles of water entrained into the zeolite framework.

49. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47, wherein the zeolite is selected from the group consisting of analcime, bikitaite, brewsterite, chabazite, clinoptilolite, faujasite, harmotome, heulandite, laumontite, mesolite, natrolite, paulingite, phillipsite, scolecite, stellerite, stilbite, and thomsonite.

50. (Original) The method of claim 47 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 5% to about 75% by weight.

51. (Original) The method of claim 50 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 20% to about 60% by weight.

52. (Original) The method of claim 51 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount of from about 30% to about 50% by weight.
53. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 further comprising an activator.
54. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 53 wherein the activator is present in an amount of from about 1% to about 20% by weight, based on the total weight of the zeolite and the at least one carrier fluid.
55. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 53 wherein the activator is selected from the group consisting of calcium hydroxide, sodium silicate, sodium fluoride, sodium silicofluoride, magnesium silicofluoride, zinc silicofluoride, sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, sodium sulfate, and mixtures thereof.
56. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 55 wherein the activator comprises calcium hydroxide in an amount of from about 1 to about 20 weight percent of the total weight of the zeolite and the carrier fluid.
57. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises an oil-based carrier fluid.
58. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 57 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises one or more oils selected from the group consisting of diesel, canola, kerosene, diesel oil, fish oil, mineral oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, soy oil, olive oil, cottonseed oil, peanut oil and paraffin.
59. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises a synthetic-based fluid.

60. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 wherein the at least one carrier fluid comprises a water-based carrier fluid.

61. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 60 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is selected from the group consisting of water and water-based gels.

62. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 60 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is selected from the group consisting of fresh water, unsaturated salt solution, brine, seawater, and saturated salt solution.

63. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 wherein the at least one carrier fluid is present in the wellbore treating fluid in an amount of from about 25% to about 95% by weight.

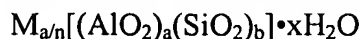
64. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 47 further comprising a surfactant.

65. (Original) The remedial composition of claim 64 wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of cetyltrimethylammonium chloride, cocoalkyltrimethylammonium chloride, cocoalkyldimethylbenzyl ammonium chloride, stearyltrimethylammonium chloride, alkylbehenyltrimethylammonium chloride dihydrogenatedtallowalkylethylmethyleammonium ethosulfate, didecyldimethylammonium chloride, dicocyldimethylammonium chloride, distearyldimethylammonium chloride, dioleyldimethylammonium chloride, trilaurylmethylammonium chloride, cocoyl-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl)methylammonium chloride, polyoxyethylene (15) cocoalkylmethylammonium chloride, olyel-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl)methylammonium chloride, tallowalkylmethylpropylenediammonium dichloride, and trimethyltallowammonium chloride.

66. (New) A method of performing operations in a wellbore comprising:
introducing a wellbore treating fluid comprising zeolite and at least one of an oil-based carrier fluid and a synthetic-based carrier fluid into the wellbore; and

forming a mass in the wellbore by allowing the wellbore treating fluid to come into contact with a water-based mud residing in the wellbore.

67. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the zeolite is represented by the formula:



where M represents one or more cations selected from the group consisting of Na, K, Mg, Ca, Sr, Li, Ba, NH_4 , CH_3NH_3 , $(CH_3)_3NH$, $(CH_3)_4N$, Ga, Ge and P; n represents the cation valence; the ratio of b:a is in a range from greater than or equal to 1 and less than or equal to 5; and x represents the moles of water entrained into the zeolite framework.

68. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the zeolite is selected from the group consisting of analcime, bikitaite, brewsterite, chabazite, clinoptilolite, faujasite, harmotome, heulandite, laumontite, mesolite, natrolite, paulingite, phillipsite, scolecite, stellerite, stilbite, and thomsonite.

69. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the oil-based carrier fluid comprises one or more oils selected from the group consisting of diesel, canola, kerosene, fish, mineral, sunflower, corn, soy, olive, cottonseed, peanut and paraffin.

70. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

drilling the wellbore with the water-based mud prior to introducing the wellbore treating fluid.

71. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the water-based mud is residing in at least one space in the wellbore, and the forming of the mass seals the at least one space.

72. (New) The method of claim 71 wherein the at least one space is selected from the group consisting of fissures, fractures, caverns, vugs, thief zones, low pressure subterranean zones, and high pressure subterranean zones.

73. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the wellbore treating fluid comprises zeolite in an amount selected from about 5% to about 75% by weight, about 20% to about 60% by weight, and about 30% to about 50% by weight.

74. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the wellbore treating fluid further comprises an activator.

75. (New) The method of claim 74 wherein the activator is selected from the group consisting of calcium hydroxide, sodium silicate, sodium fluoride, sodium silicofluoride, magnesium silicofluoride, zinc silicofluoride, sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, sodium sulfate, and mixtures thereof.

76. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the wellbore treating fluid further comprises a surfactant.

77. (New) The method of claim 76 wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of cetyltrimethylammonium chloride, cocoalkyltrimethylammonium chloride, cocoalkyldimethylbenzyl ammonium chloride, stearyltrimethylammonium chloride, alkylbehenyltrimethylammonium chloride dihydrogenatedtallowalkylethylmethyleammonium ethosulfate, didecyldimethylammonium chloride, dicocyldimethylammonium chloride, distearyldimethylammonium chloride, dioleyldimethylammonium chloride, trilaurylmethylammonium chloride, cocoyl-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl)methylammonium chloride, polyoxyethylene (15) cocoalkylmethylammonium chloride, olyel-bis-(2-hydroxyethyl)methylammonium chloride, tallowalkylmethylpropylenediammonium dichloride, and trimethyltallowammonium chloride.